



The House Committee on
HOMELAND SECURITY

Peter T. King (R-NY), Chairman

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Committee on Homeland Security
“Threat of Muslim-American Radicalization in U.S. Prisons”
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Background Information on Prominent Post-9/11 U.S. Prison Radicalization Cases

The following individuals converted to Islam and were radicalized to Islamism in American prisons and subsequently attempted to launch terror strikes in the U.S. upon release from custody:

Kevin James

- Kevin James formed Jam’iyyat Ul-Islam Is-Saheeh, or Assembly of Authentic Islam, while serving time at New Folsom State Prison, in California.
- James recruited fellow prisoner Levar Washington who claimed to be inspired to convert to Islam by the success of the 9/11 attacks.
- James developed a plan known as “Blueprint 2005” to have Washington, paroled in 2004, find legitimate employment, recruit followers with clean criminal records, obtain “pistols with silencers,” and learn bomb-making.
- Within months of his parole, Washington recruited Gregory Patterson, a Muslim convert, and Hammad Samana, a Pakistani Muslim. He obtained a shotgun and purchased a high-powered .223-caliber rifle.
- James developed a list of possible targets to include an Israeli consulate, a Jewish children’s camp in Malibu, Los Angeles International Airport, and a U.S. military recruiting station in Santa Monica.
- The plan was thwarted in July 2005; James was convicted of the charge of seditious conspiracy to levy war against the United States, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 2384, in what is believed to be only the second conviction under this statute since the Civil War. James is serving a 16-year prison term.

Jose Padilla

- During a jail term for assault in Florida, Padilla converted to Islam and soon became associated with Adham Hassoun, who introduced him to the Sunshine Mosque in Florida, which was run by the father of Adnan Shukrijumah – now one of al-Qaeda’s top commanders.
- Padilla moved to the Middle East and joined al-Qaeda. He is widely referred to as the “dirty bomb plotter” due to his being dispatched by al-Qaeda to carry out a radioactive dirty bomb attack in the U.S. in 2002.
- Adnan Shukrijumah, Padilla’s co-conspirator, rose in al-Qaeda’s leadership ranks, remains at large, and is involved in current plotting against Homeland and European targets.
- Padilla later developed the “apartment bomb” plot to blow up multiple Manhattan apartments by filling them with natural gas from kitchen stoves, then detonating timed explosive devices.
- He was arrested upon arrival at O’Hare International Airport from Pakistan on May 8, 2002. Padilla stands convicted of conspiracy to commit murder, but is serving a sentence of only 17 years, because the

Government chose not to use much of the evidence against him in open court. Padilla is one of the ten most dangerous, least compliant prisoners in federal civilian custody.

James Cromitie and Onta Williams

- James Cromitie and his co-conspirator Onta Williams both converted to Islam and were radicalized in prison by New York Department of Correctional Services (NYDOCS) prison imams including Salahuddin Muhammad.
- Cromitie and Williams, joined by LaGuerre Payen and David Williams, planned to use a surface-to-air missile against troop transport aircraft at Stewart Air National Guard Base in Newburgh, New York, and to detonate military-grade explosives at a synagogue and a Jewish community center in the Riverdale section of the Bronx.
- Onta Williams' uncle stated that his 32-year-old nephew fell under the sway of dangerously radical Islamists while serving time on drug charges.
- Cromitie, the lead defendant, was found guilty of conspiracy to conduct a weapon of mass destruction attack. He is scheduled to be sentenced on June 16, 2011.

Michael Finton

- Finton converted and radicalized in an Illinois state prison while serving a sentence for aggravated assault, and was, by his own admission, first inspired to terror by "American Taliban" John Walker Lindh – with whom he attempted to correspond while both were in custody.
- Finton plotted with an undercover FBI agent, whom he thought represented al-Qaeda, to assassinate Rep. Aaron Schock and destroy the Springfield, Illinois courthouse by means of a car bomb placed outside of the Congressman's District Office.
- Finton stated to the FBI undercover agent, Congressmen and Senators "are the people we need to go after." A parole officer searching his car found a disturbing notebook in which he wrote that "death is a blessing," and "we all dream of being a *shaheed*" or martyr.
- Finton pleaded guilty in May 2011, and awaits sentencing.

Additional Information

- Members of at least three other terror plots - the Lackawanna Six, Portland Seven, and Virginia Paint Ball plots - all had contact with prisoners in the New York prison system via visits, phone calls, and/or sending or receiving financial assistance.
- On January 20, 2010, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, under the leadership of Chairman John Kerry (D-MA), reported, "three-dozen Americans" who converted to Islam in prison are presently in Yemen – the base of operations of al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula and Anwar al-Awlaki, responsible for at least three deadly attacks and attempted attacks on the Homeland in the past two years alone.
- The U.K. government also recognizes prison radicalization as a concern, as a number of terror plots have been linked to Europe-based prison radicalization including the cases involving "shoe bomber" Richard Reid, Martin Mumbanga, and Muktar Said Ibrahim.